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# REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

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Tuesday, January 6. 1708.

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What abundant Cause have we to say, Moderation is a Virtue, in every Case that comes before us? And whether do Extremes lead us, *High-Flying*, which we have made such a Noise about; what is it but running into Excesses and Extremes in Government, Civil and Ecclesiastical, and Extremes in Notion, is *High-Flying* in its Kind every Way?

It is my Work, and ever shall I hope, to steer the middle Way to bring every Thing to its true Ballance, and find out the Golden Mean of every Action, in which alone is Wisdom, Safety and Peace.

I know I steer a doubtful Course, and cannot expect to please either one side or the other; nor indeed comparing it to the true End which I pursue, do I seek it or am I concern'd, who I either please or dis-please.

Yet I cannot say, but I am concern'd to be he rightly understood; first, because those that will not, are always apt to pretend, they cannot understand me; and secondly, those are pinch'd with the Argument, are always misconstruing the Author; for this Reason, and that what I say may be the more extensive, I shall endeavour to explain my self, so that nothing but willfull Prejudice can mis-represent me.

It has been advanc'd by the Author of the *Observator*, that the best Way of carrying on the War against France, is to prosecute it chiefly by Sea; this, it is said, was given by two great Men, as their Advice to his late Majesty King *William*, and some Reflections have been made on the King's Memory, for not taking that Advice; with what Justice I refer to my last.—And other Re-

Reflections are made in the same Paper on the Imperfections of the greatest Successes by Land, in order to illustrate this; and I am now to examine this Part, and to oppose plainly and directly, and consequently fairly; I take the Terms of the Question from my Antagonist, and

1. I do affirm, that prosecuting the War against *France* chiefly by Sea, is not the best Way of prosecuting the War.

2. It is not the only Way to humble the French King, to ruin his Naval Power.

3. I'll prove the other Part of it, that the only Way to humble him, is to break in upon him by Land, wrest from him his Conquests, break into his Country, and destroy his Armies.

I have nothing to fence against here, ~~But~~ that unreasonable and censorious Spirit that shall suggest, I am undervaluing our Naval Power; I expect now to be treated as a fair Disputant with Argument, not Calumny; I give no ill Language, and perswade my self, the Opposer is a Person of such Candour, I shall receive none—But the Age is willful and furious, and therefore I am obliged to explain as I go—I am not at all lessening the Value of our Naval War, but stating the true Medium, and letting every Thing have its true Weight. These Things we ought to have done, and not to leave the other Things undone.

To prosecute the War against *France* chiefly by Sea, as the Subject in this Case, is to be consider'd, 1. Wherein did the Power of *France* chiefly consist, all the World will allow me, it did not chiefly consist in his Naval Power—And this has been too evident in the Prosecution of the several Parts of the War, wherein *France* has told us, that he could lay up his Fleet in his Harbours, and yet be as dangerous an Enemy to us as before—When the Loss of so great a Part of his Navy fell upon him, as at *La Hogue*, what a Demonstration did he give of this? From that Day to this, you have had an acknowledg'd Superiority at Sea, and has the French been the less formidable to us? No, he has had this Advantage of us, that he has very rarely fitted out his whole Fleet since, by which he has sav'd an Expence of 30 Millions of Lives every

Year, and yet we have been obliged every Summer to fit out the same Force—  
I know, it has been the Opinion of some, as great Men as Major *Wildman*, or D. of *Schombergh*, that we might rather retrench halfour Naval Expence; and that to keep 50 Capital Ships always together, would be as effectual to our Safety, as the great Fleets we have always had out, and leave us more able both to guard and carry on our Commerce.

1. This, they say, would prompt the French to come out in Navies, and they always did us least Harm, when their Fleet was out, because then their Privateers were call'd in, and we could soon add to our 50 Sail, from flying Squadrons, as we saw Occasions.

2. This Method would save us near a Million yearly in Expence.

3. It would put the French upon spending at least a Million Sterling per Annum, more than they now do; and to put them to Expenſe, is the Way to reduce them.

4. It might save us half a Million yearly in the Losses of Trade, by lessening the Number of Privateers, which when their Fleet is fitted out, are restrain'd for Want of Men.

5. It may be the best Way to reduce their Naval Power, since then we may perhaps come sometime or other to Hands with them; whereas, if they lay up their Fleet, all the Fleets you can fit out, cannot come at them to hurt them,

I do not say, this is my Opinion, but I say, it has been the Opinion of some Men, whose Judgment is unquestion'd, and their sincere Well-wishes to our Safety too; my Argument is plain, the best Way to prosecute a War against any Prince, is to fall upon him in that Part, in which his Power does chiefly consist. Now 'tis apparent, the great Power of *France*, and in which he had gain'd the Title of Invincible, consisted in his Land-Forces—Which, at the Beginning of the late War, in Goodness of Troops, Officers, Discipline, Management, and the Experience of their Generals, exceeded not only any in Europe, but perhaps all Europe put together—And, let those that underlaue the Conduct of the late King, and tell

us of the little Progress of that War, examine the Difference between the Forces of the French, at that Time and now, and how he had their unbroken, disciplin'd, veteran Legions to contend with, Armies that were not to be box'd out of their Trenches, *a la mode de Turin*, with less than half their Number; But that by the Way.

There were the Things, the Power of France confilcted in; his Naval Strength was an Accident to his Power, the main Part in which he was terrible to us all, was his Army, and it could not be, that the best way to humble him was to fall on him chiefly by Sea, since by that you could not have hurt him in the most essential Part of his Strength.

2. The second Argument is, That the only Way to beat France is to ruin his Naval Power. I shall first prove, this cannot be true; secondly, that if it were, this is not to be done by carrying on the War chiefly by Sea.

1. Ruining the Naval Power of France cannot be the only Way to humble him, because were it carry'd on with the utmost Success, it could not reduce him; whereas a vigorous Prosecution of the War by Land might ruin him, and within a little had entirely subdued him—And here may be equally answer'd that Suggestion in the *Observer*, which is spoken, 1. To undervalue the Labours of King William; and 2. To bring the Nation into a Dilisko of the Land Service, as useless and ineffectual.

1. We all know, how little Great Britain gain'd by the Land-War in his (K. William) Reign.

2. We may see plainly, our marchiont Land-Victories at Hockfet and Ramelies, have been far from ruining France.

I would never have touch'd upon the Ignorance of these Suggestions, if it had not been for the ill Use may be made of them by some, in these our divided Times; I hope, the Author had no such Design, but I can tell him, this Cry of Wooden Walls, and encraeting our Naval Strength, has been always prompted by those that have least Mind France should be beaten at all—Were we upon a defensive War, and were France threatening to attack us at home, then wooden Walls for my Money, and one Fleet were worth two Armies; but while GOD be praised, we can keep the War abroad, and that the Protestant Religion and Liberties of Europe are to be defended in defending the Interest of our Allies, in protecting their Liberties and Barriers to our own — While this is our Happiness, our Business is to carry the War on heartily and principally by Land; at the same Time, pray, mistake me not, Gentlemen, at the same Time I say, not slacking all possible Endeavours at Sea; in which give me Leave to say, it has not been our Want of Power, but our ill disposing that Power, which has been our Discouragement; of which hereafter.

## MISCELLANEA.

THO' my Defence of the late King's Memory has made me digress from the Subject of this Part, which I was upon, yet I think it of such Moment, that I cannot omit the Prosecution of it; I have been upon proving the Consequence, which our Colonies in America are to us, and how concern'd we ought to be to protect, encourage, encrease and strengthen them.

In pursuing this, I have encoutnred that Giant of an Objection, That to strengthen

the Hands of our Brethren in America, is to make them set up for an Independance on us, And either make them our Enemies, or put them into the Hands of our Enemies: I will not say, I have satisfy'd you in this Point, Gentlemen, you that read are Judges, not I; But I have given my Opinion, and I hope, have proved it, that just the contrary is true; and that to make our Colonies rich, great, populous and strong, is the only Way to secure them to you for ever,

ever, and effectually to prevent the Inde-pendency they would perswade us to apprehend; that according to the Simily I took up, this Lady, we court, would be gotten wth Child, and must marry us.

I cannot dismis this Affair, without en-tring a little into its contraries; and here I'll show you, what the Neglect of our Col-lonies exposes us to, and what they lose us; which might be gain'd, if they were put in a Posture as they ought to be.

I am the willinger to argue close to this Point, because the Parliament having the Case of our Plantations now before them, may perhaps think it convenient to take it into Consideration; and this makes it parti-cularly seasonable, but the Particulars be-ing many, and the Extent of the Subject too much for this Paper, I am obliged to proceed more confusely than otherwise. But to be-gin with Generals, I shall offer some Queries, for any Body to answer that can; for upon my Word, to give such an Answer, as in Reason and from the Nature of the Thing is just, would be too discouraging; but from these Queries may be drawn some Conse-quences, which, I pray GOD, may not prove true in the Event.

1. Does not the Safety of our Collonies con-sist rather in their Circumstances, and the Circumstances of their Neighbours, than in their own Strength, or in our Capacity of defending them?

2. Were the French Masters of New Spain, as the Spaniards are, how long in any Pro-bability should we posseis any of our Plan-tations in America, especially our Island Col-lonies?

3. Should this War end without recover-ing Spain from the House of Bourbon, is it not very likely, the Spanish Power un-der French Management may put us in the same Danger?

4. Should the French find out the Ways, I have been mentioning, to make his People in Canada great and strong, as we might make N. England, how long shall there be such a Place as New England left in the World?

On the other Hand,

1. Were we justly concern'd for, and did we duly apply to the making *New England*, as great and as strong, as by reasonable Im-provements might be done, how long would the French keep their Footing in the North of America, and as it were invest us?

2. Did we seriously apply to the strength-ning, encreasing and improving our Colony in *New England*, might not that Place soon be made a Centre of Strength to the whole, and be able in Time to protect them from the Dangers above-mention'd, and that without any considerable Expence to Britain, to the infinite Advantage of the whole?— And this, by the Way, had long since been attempted, and might, by this Time, have convinc'd us of the Benefit, to the saving the Nation two Millions in Expence, and two more in Losses, but Satan bindred.

#### A D V E R T I S E M E N T S.

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